DEPARTMENT OF STATE
Washington, D.C. 20520

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September 10, 1980

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Dear Mr. Chairman:

The President has asked me to respond to your letter of July 8 in which you expressed concern about recent developments in the Republic of Korea. We very much share your concern -- and that of your government -- that the political structure in Korea develop in a direction that can have the full support of the Korean people.

We have a great deal of confidence in the fundamental strength of the Korean people and nation and are looking forward to a time when they will be able to resolve their differences through the political process rather than through confrontation.

Sincerely,

Richard Holbrooke
Assistant Secretary
Bureau of East Asian and Pacific Affairs

Mr. Ichio Asukata,
Chairman, Central Executive Committee,
Socialist Party of Japan,
1-8-1 Nagata-Cho,
Chiyoda-Ku,
Tokyo.

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The President
The White House
Washington D.C.

July 3, 1980

Dear Mr. President:

I have the honor of addressing this petition to you, availing myself of the opportunity of your visit to Japan to attend the funeral of the late Prime Minister Ohira.

We are greatly concerned over the recent developments in South Korea. The martial law command of that country announced on July 4 that Mr. Kim Dae Jung and other dessident leaders would be tried by a military court under the National Security Law, the Anti-Communist Law, the criminal law concerning attempted sedition and other laws. If Mr. Kim and others are tried by a military court, it is almost certain that they will face a death sentence.

We consider this to be a political plot of the military authorities of South Korea to get rid of Mr. Kim Dae Jung and other dissident leaders and thereby to prevent South Korea's democratization. People throughout the country who cherish democracy are strongly protesting against these measures taken by South Korea's military authorities.

I, on behalf of the Socialist Party of Japan, earnestly hope that you will help in the democratization of South Korea by demanding that the military authorities of South Korea suspend the measures taken and release all the political prisoners at once.

Very truly yours

Ichio Asukata

Ichio Asukata
Chairman
Central Executive Committee

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